EXPERIENCE JAPAN and ASIA IN NEW YORK CITY
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Luxury Restaurant Bento Boxes

Bring Spring Colors to Your Bento

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SPRING BENTO ISSUE

Page 2

Luxury Restaurant Bento Boxes

A bento box captures a variety of flavors in one small universe, and we enjoy our lunchboxes with nutritiously-balanced, colorful items. But the feature of bento also resonates with the essence of kaiseki, omakase, or chef's tasting course. Here we introduce 5 luxury boxed dishes served in restaurants

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Bring Spring Colors to Your Bento

For those who enjoy making bento, we share some tools and techniques to bring spring colors to your everyday creations.

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Presented by the No.1 Japanese free paper in New York. NY Japion

Cover photo courtesy of Soba Totto
Midtown's soba noodle specialty restaurant Soba Totto (211 E. 43rd St. / www.sobatotto.com) created *Shokado Bento* for this month's cover photo

Luxury Restaurant Bento Boxes

For those of you enjoying a bento regularly, bento means a casual lunch box with sampling sizes of assorted dishes. But bento can be a luxury dish. Just like an Omakase or a Tasting Course, the bento boxes served at restaurants contain a variety of dishes that capture each restaurant's essence and signature flavor—often nutritiously well-balanced, gorgeous to your eyes, and full of seasonal items. Here are some of the luxury restaurant bento boxes you must try now.

Box of Dreams ($45[Lunch], $48[Dinner])

Presented as if it's a jewelry box, Hatsuhana's *Box of Dreams* epitomizes how a restaurant bento box dish can be different from your regular take-out bento boxes. It is comprised of 9 mini-bowls of *chirashizushi* (sashimi and other toppings over sushi rice) beautifully arranged in a box subdivided into 9 small sections. With fresh, colorful fish including toro, yellowtail, scallop, shrimp, uni, and trout, it is irresistibly cute and makes you reluctant to put your chopsticks into the dish, but once you dig in, you cannot stop eating it. This immaculate boxed dish was introduced in this 43-year old sushi restaurant over 15 years ago, and it's been popular ever since. "It has grown in sales these past few years due to postings on social media," says Mr. Kikuzo Shiraishi, manager of the restaurant. He continues, "It's made for one person, but I see many couples and friends enjoy it together by sharing it." *Box of Dreams* is available for both lunch and dinner, and *Box of Dreams Mini* ($36) with six fishes of your choice is also served at dinnertime only.

Hatsuhana
17 E. 48th St., (bet. Madison & 5th Aves.), New York, NY 10017
TEL. 212-355-3345 | www.hatsuhana.com

Hasaki Weekend Lunch Special Bento Box ($28-34)

Nestled in the East Village since 1984, Hasaki is one of New Yorkers' beloved sushi restaurants. Only available on weekends, this lunch bento box is perfect for sampling Hasaki's flavors. It comes with your choice of main dish (*Una-ju* [pictured], *Sushi*, *Tekka Don* [tuna sashimi over rice], *Salmon Oyako Don* [salmon and ikura over rice], and *Garlic Ribeye Don*), sashimi, grilled salmon, steamed shumai dumplings, assorted vegetable dishes, salad, miso soup, and fresh fruits, making you more than full and satisfied. Hasaki was mentioned in the Michelin Guide 2018 for its excellent food and service.

Hasaki
210 E. 9th St., (bet. 2nd & 3rd Aves.), New York, NY 10003
TEL. 212-473-3327 | www.hasakinyc.com

Chirashi Sushi & Sashimi Box ($26)

Lunchtime at MIFUNE New York is bustling with business people who come to enjoy intricately-prepared authentic Japanese cuisine in an upscale atmosphere. Housing Michelin-starred Sushi AMANE downstairs, MIFUNE's sushi and sashimi are particularly praised. Arranged in eye-catching hexagonal boxes, their lunchtime-exclusive *Chirashi Sushi & Sashimi Bento* is a great way to sample their offerings. Featuring sashimi (Bluefin Tuna, King Salmon, and other chef's choice of fish of the day) and two types of chirashi, it will amuse your taste buds and mind. MIFUNE also serves *Bluefin Tuna Tartare and Avocado Box* for $26 during lunchtime.

MIFUNE New York
245 E. 44th St. (bet. 2nd & 3rd Aves.) New York, NY 10017
TEL. 212-986-2800 | www.mifune-restaurant.com

Lunch Bento Box: Nobu ($70)

If you like to enjoy a little bit of everything from Japanese fusion empire Nobu, go to Nobu 57 and order their lunch bento box. It showcases a selection of Chef Nobu Matsuhisa's signature dishes, including *Yellowtail Tartar, King Crab Amazu Ponzu*, and *Ribeye Anticucho* in addition to traditional Japanese like miso-marinated black cod grill and assorted sushi. Also available during lunchtime is *Lunch Bento Box Classic* for $50 with slightly less items.

Nobu 57
40 W. 57th St. (bet. 5th & 6th Aves.), New York, NY 10019
TEL. 212-757-3000 | www.noburestaurants.com/fifty-seven

Healthy Bento Box ($35)

Shinbashi offers three different kinds of bento boxes for lunchtime, and this *Healthy Bento Box* stands out in the way it was created, conscious of nutritious and caloric values. It boasts a good balance of protein and vegetables and includes superfoods like chia, seaweed, miso and multi-grains. It comes with neither sashimi nor sushi, but is full of energy-boosting and detoxifying ingredients, making health-conscious New Yorkers happy.

Shinbashi
7 E. 48th St. (bet. Madison & 5th Aves.) New York, NY 10017
TEL. 212-813-1009 | www.shinbashinyc.com

Bring Spring Colors to Your Bento

As it is commonly known, the Japanese food culture esteems seasonality. Why not infuse the warm spring weather into your bento box? Here we share tools and techniques that can easily add spring touches to your everyday creations.

Super Tools that Brighten Up Your Bento

Super Tool 1

Soy Paper / Soy Wrapper / Soy Sheet

Made with soybeans, this thin, colorful, edible paper is often used as a substitute for nori seaweed. Unlike black nori, it comes in various colors like orange, yellow, green, pink, and white, making it perfect to create a spring-like mood in your cooking. Use it just like nori by rolling sushi and wrapping onigiri rice balls, and for your bento box, we suggest trying hand-rolls. Cut a sheet into four pieces, and take it with rice and ingredients for filling, separately. Then, assemble them as hand rolls at lunchtime. Soy paper, soy wrapper, and soy sheet—the product name varies from brand to brand.

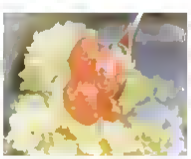
To use, first cut it to your desired size.

Bring rice, toppings and soy paper in separate containers to keep fresh. Then make hand-rolls at lunch time.

Super Tool 2

Tarako/Mentaiko Pasta Sauce

Tarako (cod roe) and *mentaiko* (spicy cod roe) are common ingredients for Japanese style pasta sauce. Made by mixing tarako or mentaiko with butter or olive oil and some other seasonings, the sauce is so popular that commercially manufactured, pre-cooked ones are available. You can actually use one of those store-bought tarako/mentaiko sauces to dress up your bento items. As pictured below, potato salad and greens are accentuated by bits of tiny roe and cute pink color.



Squeeze out sauce from a package and use it as mixins or dressings.

Super Tool 3

Flower-Shaped Cutter

Decorate your bento with flower-shaped food as the easiest way to bring a spring-like impression. You can cut out thinly sliced vegetables, *kamaboko* (fishcakes), and *usuyaki tamago* (thin omelet) for this.

Shredded usuyaki tamago and carrots cutout in shapes of cherry blossom over rice (top). Rice ball with crab salad topped with flower-shaped carrots and egg (left).

Make Cherry Blossom-Inspired Onigiri Rice Balls

Onigiri rice ball is one of the most common lunch items, and it can be enjoyed in countless ways. Here are tasty ways to add cherry blossom colors.

Mix Salmon Flakes

Mix store-bought salmon flakes into cooked rice and make it into your favorite shape. The flakes are already salty, so you don't need any additional salt to season your onigiri, but if you prefer a really salty one, feel free to dust onigiri with salt.

Mix Umeboshi Paste

Umeboshi (pickled plum) comes in various shades of pink, sizes, and texture. Here we use a soft textured umeboshi with vibrant colors and red *shiso* leaves. Break the flesh, remove the pit inside, make it into paste, and mix it into rice. Then shape it into an onigiri.

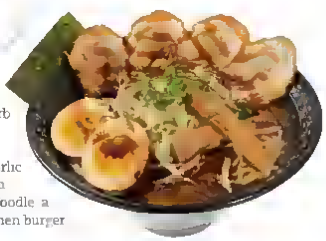
Mix Shredded Pickled Ginger

Served on the side of sushi, *gari* (pickled ginger) has a pale-pink color, which is ideal for brightening your onigiri. Shred or mince it, mix it into rice, and then make an onigiri. Gari is sweet and sour but not salty enough, so season the ball with a tiny bit of salt.

Dress with Sakura Denbu

Sakura denbu is a fish flake sweetened with sugar and tinted with pink food coloring. It's often used for decorating chirashi-zushi, and its striking color and fluffy texture really enhances the look as if flowers are blooming. Dust onigiri with sakura denbu to enjoy the floral effect.

Once digging in to *Mt. Fuji Ramen* umami from the double cheeses, one in the broth and the other on top, spreads in your mouth



Flavorful yet light tonkotsu broth is superb in Setagaya's signature *Tonkotsu Ramen* (left) Another popular dish, *Black Garlic Ramen*, has a powerful kick from mayo garlic oil. (right) All noodles used in their ramen bowls are custom made by Shimamoto Noodle, a company launched by the inventor of ramen burger Keizo Shimamoto

Ramen Fixture in Bustling Japan Village

Ramen Setagaya at Japan Village

934 3rd Ave (at 35th St) Brooklyn NY 11232
Mon-Thu 11:30 am-7:30 pm Fri-Sun 11:30 am-8:30 pm

Ramen Setagaya has been one of New Yorkers' favorite ramen joints since its opening in the East Village about a decade ago. Their latest location located inside a food hall in the newly opened Japan Village is "busy all day long" according to Mr. Takayoshi Seno, COO of SETAGAYA USA INC. Setagaya's signature is *Tonkotsu Ramen* boasting rich and smooth pork bone broth and super thin, straight noodles, but Mr. Seno admits. "The most popular item here is *Mt. Fuji Ramen* that we debuted at the opening of this location. It features an abundance of cheese and corn and is topped with heaping grated cheese that creates a cone-shaped Mt. Fuji. Taste-wise, it has a lot of umami." They also introduced *Hiroshi Buns*, bao stuffed with chashu roast pork, scallion and spicy mayo. The flavorful snack is a perfect grab-and-go dish and can also be enjoyed as a side accompanying a ramen bowl. Even if you don't find a seat at Setagaya's counter and window-side tables, you can always enjoy your bowl of ramen at the shareable table sets in the food hall.

You can take a seat either on the L-shape counter or high tables by the window

Customer favorite non-ramen dish is *Hiroshi Buns*. Chashu roast pork for their ramen bowls is seared right before it is stuffed in the bao buns. Its melting texture and savory flavor is further accentuated by spicy mayo and shredded scallions

Enjoy "Shinka" (Evolution) of Ramen

Shinka Ramen

93 Bowery (at Hester St) New York NY 10002
TEL 212-343-3111 | www.shinkaramen.com
Mon-Thu 5-11 pm Fri 5 pm-2 am Sat 11:30 am-2:30 pm
5 pm-2 am Sun 11:30 am-2:30 pm, 5-10 pm

Kogane Ramen makes noodles in-house daily: thin, straight noodles for tonkotsu soup and another straight noodle without egg for light soup. The latter is also used in vegan ramen.

Painstakingly Crafted Ramen and Comfort Food

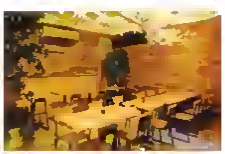
Kogane Ramen (Manhattan location)

53 W. 11th St. (bet. 8th & 9th Aves.) New York, NY 10011
TEL. 212 337 9832 | www.koganeramen.com |
Mon-Thu: 11:30 am-10:30 pm Fri & Sat: 11:30 am-[illegible]:0 pm Sun: 12 pm-10:30 pm

Late last year we saw the addition of a Manhattan location to the Brooklyn-based **Kogane Ramen**. Found down the stairs of a Chelsea building, the elegant interior with custom-wood tables and walls draws you in. But Kogane's attention to detail goes beyond its sophisticated design. The noodles are homemade daily, with two types for different ramen styles, one for rich tonkotsu broth and the other for light shoyu broth. The signature *Tonkotsu Ramen* features broth simmered for 16 hours, and is adorned with tender, melt-in-your-mouth pork jowl instead of the typical chashu. Another standout ramen is the *Miso Lobster Ramen*, with both fresh lobster and braised pork belly in a tonkotsu and lobster broth. The tastes of the separately cooked lobster and pork belly perfectly complement each other, and the black garlic oil adds some additional flavor. Other must-try menu items include the home-style *Yaki Ramen*, the *Ramen Burger* featuring Angus beef in teriyaki sauce, and the fried softshell crab bao *Spider Bun*. Don't forget some sake or other drinks to accompany your noodles, as well as the Japanese-style desserts which are a great way to end a delicious meal.

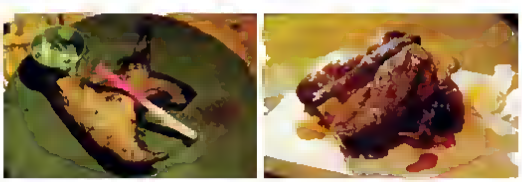
Miso Lobster Ramen is a plentiful dish featuring both a lobster claw and chashu in exquisite broth with complex flavors. (left) Sweet and savory sauce nicely dresses *Yaki Ramen* stir fry noodles. (right)

Crunchy and savory *Ramen Burger* is great with sake and Japanese beer



Tucked inside the lobby of the Wyndham Hotel on Bowery is **Shinka Ramen**, a cool spot offering a variety of innovative noodle and other dishes from Chef Waki. The standout ramen is the *Beef Bone Marrow Gyukotsu*, a winner at last year's JAPAN Fes Ramen Contest. The broth is simmered for 14 hours with three different types of beef bones, and it features American wagyu that has been braised for three hours. Chef Waki suggests that customers melt the accompanying bone marrow into the soup to further enrich the taste. He is a fan of using his personal smoker to make unique creations, one being the *Smoked Duck* ramen. It features duck bone broth made with lots of vegetables and Asian herbs such as goji berry and jujube, which complements house-smoked duck breast. They also serve playful izakaya dishes, all of which are accentuated with Asian (and Chef Waki's) twists, such as *Smoked Hamachi Kama*, *Pulled Pork Nachos* with wonton chips, and triple cooked *Shinka Pork Ribs*. With a full bar, Shinka also celebrates a late-night happy hour.

Rich and creamy beef bone broth is even more enriched by bone marrow



Smoked right on the table, *Smoked Hamachi Kama* allows you a unique way to enjoy yellowtail collar. (left) Braised, deep fried, and glazed, *Shinka Pork Ribs* are crunchy outside and juicy inside. (right)

Pink Cocktails Calling In Spring

In Japan, spring is celebrated with the blooming of cherry blossoms Give a toast with five cocktails accentuated with vivid colors of spring

Sakura

The Sakura is lightly sweet with edible cherry blossoms inside, balanced with a bright acidity from the lemon and refresh ing smooth sake But just as actual cherry blossoms are this cocktail s ephemeral and will only be available until the end of April

Izakaya MEW
53 W 35th St (bet. 5th & 6th Aves)
New York NY 10001
TEL 646 368 8384
www mewnyc com

Butterfly Effect

Mildly citrusy and crisp it s a magic show served in a martini glass The cocktail starts off a sapphire blue from the butterfly pea flower tea, and the server splashes in lime juice instantly transforming the cocktail into a vibrantly magenta color

Shinka Ramen
93 Bowery (at Hester St) New York NY 10002
TEL 212 343 8111 | www shinkaramen com

Pepper Lunch was founded in Japan in 1994 and has expanded to over 470 stores in 16 countries all over the world!

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March 21

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Tel : 917-472-7158 Web : PepperLunch-USA.com
Hours : Monday-Sunday 11 AM~11 PM (Last Order 10:30 PM)

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Requirements
1 Follow us @pepperlunch_usa
2 Post a photo of your meal, tag a friend with the hashtags
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1st Prize: 1 Winner Wins $100* Gift Certificate
2nd Prize : 5 Winners Win $30* Gift Certificate
3rd Prize : 10 Winners Win $5 Gift Certificate

Cherry Blossom

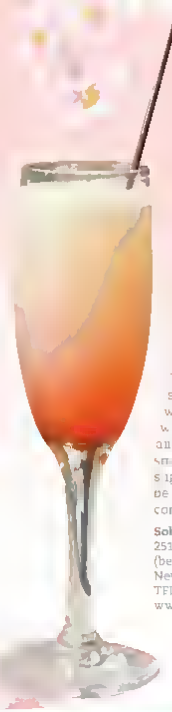
Inside the glass lies a salt cured cherry blossom frozen in a spherical ice mold as its centerpiece. The cocktail's vibrantly pink color is achieved from the prickly pear puree and blends the sake with a touch of simple syrup and a dash of lime.

Rabbit House
76 Forsyth St. (bet. Grand & Hester Sts.)
New York, NY 10002
TEL: 212 343 4200
www.rabbithouse.nyc

Lychee Martini

Clear with a bit[illegible] it is made from Kissui vodka, vermouth, [illegible] and lychee liqueur, stirred and garnished with refreshing cucumber. Its quick and clean finish makes it a perfectly light drink well suited for the spring and summer times.

wagamama
55 3rd Ave, New York, NY 10003 | TEL: 917 639 6030
605 3rd Ave, New York, NY 10158 | TEL: 646 813 3396
210 5th Ave, New York, [illegible] 10010 | TEL: 212 340 6 33
www.wagamama.us



Magokoro (Pure Heart)

True to its name, this is a sweet cocktail harmonized with a tart touch. Made with sake, lemon, Calpico and grenadine, Magokoro is smooth and creamy with a slight tangy aftertaste. Can be enjoyed alone or a perfect complement to your meal.

Soba Noodle Azuma
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(bet. 8th Ave. & Broadway)
New York, NY 10019
TEL: 917 262 0540
www.sobaazuma55.com

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Restaurants You Can Enjoy Temaki Hand Roll Sushi

Information presented here was updated on March 15

Asuka Sushi
300 W 23rd St
New York, NY 10011
www.asukasushiny.com

Daigo Hand Roll Bar
445 Albee Sq W
(Inside Dekalb Market Hall)
Brooklyn, NY 11201
www.daigohandrollbar.com

DOMODOMO
140 W Houston St.
New York, NY 10012
www.domodomonyc.com

Fuji Hibachi
321 W 42nd St
New York, NY 10036
www.fujihibachinyc.com

Gajin
37-12 31st Ave
Astoria, NY 11103
www.gajinny.com

Hane Sushi
346 1st Ave
New York, NY 10009
www.hanenyc.com

Hatsuhana
17 E 48th St
New York, NY 10017
www.hatsuhana.com

KazuNori | The Original Hand Roll Bar
15 W 28th St
New York NY 10001
www.kazunorisushi.com

Kikoo Sushi
141 1st Ave
New York NY 10003
www.kikoosushi.com

KOI RESTAURANT
40 W 40th St
(Inside Bryant Park Hotel)
New York, NY 10018
www.koirestaurant.com/new-york

MakiMaki
1369 6th Ave
New York NY 10019
www.makimaki.nyc

Mottsu
285 Mott St., New York, NY 10012
www.mottsu.com

NATSUMI TAPAS
323 3rd Ave , New York NY 10010
www.natsumitapas.com

Okinu
216 Thompson St
New York, NY 10012
www.okinunyc.com

Okozushi
376 Graham Ave.
Brooklyn, NY 11211
www.okozushi.com

ROLLN
38 E. 23rd St.
New York, NY 10010
www.rolinco.com

Sen Sakana
28 W 44th St., New York, NY 10036
www.sensakana.com

SUGARFISH by sushi nozawa
202 Spring St., New York, NY 10012
www.sugarfishsushi.com/nyc-soho

Sushi By M
75 E 4th St
New York, NY 10003
www.sushibym.com

Sushi Lab
132 W 47th St.
New York, NY 10036
https //sushilab.nyc/menu

Sushi of Gari
402 E. 78th St.
New York, NY 10075

370 Columbus Ave
New York, NY 10024

347 W 46th St.
New York, NY 10036

130 W Broadway
New York, NY 10013
www.sushiofgari.com

Takeshi Sushi
28 Grand St.
New York, NY 10013
www.takeshisushiny.com

The Lobster Club
98 E 53rd St
New York NY 10022
www.thelobsterclub.com

Tsuru Ton Tan
21 E 16th St.
New York NY, 10003

64 W 48th St
New York NY 10036
www.tsurutontan.com

Yuka Japanese
1557 2nd Ave
New York, NY 10028
www.yukajapanese.com

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Beating Fatigue and Insomnia
When your body is overly exhausted, it can be difficult to fall asleep. In that case, drink hot celery soup. Cut 2 stalks of celery into pieces and put them into boiling water to make soup. Celery is believed to calm your nerves and the soup helps you go to sleep easily.

Mori 351 5th Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11215
(347) 537-7754 | www.mori-nyc.com

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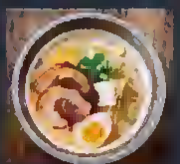
CHEF AMORN- Thai Cuisine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For Reservation: 646-952-0364
yamadachikara-ny.com

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I saw your restaurant on Chopsticks NY
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Promotion here I come!!

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516-883-3500

KUU RAMEN
20 John St.
(bet. Broadway & Nassau St.)

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The Kii Mountains stretch over three prefectures—Mie, Nara and Wakayama—and the three sacred sites in the area are connected by pilgrimage routes that lead to the ancient capitals of Nara and Kyoto. One of the three sacred sites, the Yoshino and Omine area, has steep mountains and serves as the sacred center of Shugen-do, the Japanese religion that combines Shintoism, Buddhism, Taoism, and mountain worship. Another site, Kumano Sanzan, is the head shrine of 3,000 shrines known as the Kumano Jinja Shrines. Koya-san, another site, is the deep forest where Kongobu-ji Temple, the head temple of Shingonshu, is situated. The World Heritage Sites bear exceptional testimony to the development of Japan's religious culture over one thousand years.

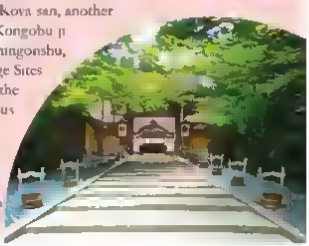

Photo courtesy of Heiwa-ga Ichiban (http://heiwa-ga-ichiban.jp/)

Chopsticks NY Contest

The fourth installation of the Chopsticks NY Instagram Photo Contest series features "Tea"! Sencha, matcha, gokuryo, hojicha, tea-infused cocktails, matcha green tea sweets, etc. Share your photos of tea and tea-related drinks and dishes with #ChopsticksTea by June 5th.

Deadline:
June 5, 2019

Don't forget #ChopsticksTea

$25 Gift Certificate for 2 Winners

Two winners will receive a $25 Gift Certificate www.giftrocket.com.

今月のイチオシ料理
PICK UP DISHES OF THE MONTH

Soba Totto

Midtown East

211 E 43rd St., (bet. 2nd & 3rd Aves), New York, NY 10017
TEL 212-557-8200 | www.sobatotto.com |

After numerous requests, Soba Totto's *Uni Soba* returns to their popular menu. With house-made, aromatic dipping broth, topped over a bed of cold soba noodles are excellently sourced uni, harvested from the best of locations only in-season.

Curry-Ya

Midtown West

746 9th Ave , (bet. 50th & 51st Sts), New York, NY 10019
TEL 646-998-4810 | www.nycurry-ya.com |

Inspired by curry served at the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo, Curry-Ya's Japanese curry is simmered with apples and assorted vegetables for a perfect balance of sweet and savory. Deep-fried Berkshire pork gives it a crunch and an extra boost of flavor.

hanon

Williamsburg

436 Union Ave , (bet. Devoe & Keap Sts), Brooklyn, NY 11211
TEL 347-799-1433 |

This new udon specialty restaurant's set features three crafted dipping sauces and crispy tempura. Get noodles 'half and half' for both *Zenryufun* (whole wheat enhanced) and their signature *Sasauchi* (green from added bamboo and barley leaf powder) noodles.

GOEMON

Nolita

29 Kenmare St., (bet. Mott & Elizabeth Sts.), New York, NY 10012 | TEL: 212-226-1262 | www.cocoronandgoemon.com

This unique soup curry bathes chicken with a medley of vegetables. Unlike usual Japanese curry, the texture is thin but labyrinthine in flavor. Take the soup to a new level of complexity by cutting open the juicy chicken.

Kuu Ramen

Financial District

20 John St., (bet. Nassau St. & Broadway), New York, NY 10038 TEL: 212-571-7177 | www.kuuramen.com |

Both hearty and fiery, Kuu Ramen's *Kuu Chili* features spicy ground chicken, soft *kakuni* (braised pork belly), poached egg, and *naruto* (Japanese fish cake). Further amplifying its piquancy are the chili threads and chili oil.

TABETOMO

East Village

131 Ave. A, (bet. 7th St. & St. Marks Pl.), New York, NY 10009 TEL: 646-850-6414 | www.tabetomonyc.com |

TABETOMO's *Tonkotsu Tsukemen*, a dipping-style ramen, boasts medium-thick noodles and rich, creamy tonkotsu broth simmered for over 60 hours. The piping hot broth cools down after dipping cold noodles a few times, but it can be reheated with "yakiishi", hot stone.

UOTORA

Crown Heights

1075 Bergen St., (bet. Nostrand & Rogers Aves.), Brooklyn, NY 11216 TEL: 718-513-0724 | www.uotorabk.com |

This Crown Height's gem offers sushi and sashimi made from quality fish handpicked by two Japanese veteran chefs and prepared by their masterful techniques. Their *Sushi Deluxe* (8 pieces sushi and 1 roll) made with locally sourced, seasonal fish, is served at a steal of a price.

Izakaya At Home

[illegible] produce [illegible] izakaya dish and sake [illegible] with it. Featuring this month's [illegible] that celebrates the arrival of spring—expressing mellow spring colors and seasonal flavors on a plate. Matching this refreshing dish is Mimurosugi Junmai Ginjo Yamadanishiki from Imanishi Syuzou

Best Pairing of the Month

Asparagus & Shrimp Salad w/ Tofu & Sesame Sauce × Mimurosugi Junmai Ginjo Yamadanishiki

Recipe by Misako Sassa @MisakoSassa food_i_eat_cook
Pairing by Toshiyuki Koizumi, Wasan Brooklyn
www.wasan-nyc.com @wasanbrooklyn wasan_brooklyn

×

New to the US market **Mimurosugi Junmai Ginjo Yamadanishiki** from Nara Prefecture boasts a calm aroma and fresh and clean rice flavor spreading throughout the mouth. "Sake made with Yamadanishiki rice tends to have a hint of grassy flavor making it compatible with green asparagus," says Mr. Koizumi. This dish also features shrimp that has briny sweetness so he chose this junmai sake that holds rice umami which complements shrimp's taste profile. "The Mimurosugi perfectly embraces the two different flavors of this dish and even enhances them. So, the sake itself is a kind of seasoning in this case."

Info: Imanishi Syuzou
www.imanishisyuzou.com
Distributed by NY Mutual Trading, Inc.
www.nymtc.com

Ingredients: Serves 4

- ❑ 16 asparagus stalks
- ❑ 12 deveined and shelled shrimp
- ❑ 3 oz silken tofu
- ❑ 3.5 oz sesame paste (can be substituted with tahini)

- ❑ 1 tsp fish sauce ❑ 1/4 cup water
- ❑ 1 tsp soy sauce ❑ 1 tsp sugar
- ❑ 1 1/2 tbsp *mirin*

Directions:

1 Cut off the hard end of the asparagus and using peeler, peel off the bottom part.

2 Boil pot of water and salt (not included in the ingredients list) generously. Put in stem part of asparagus while holding the top part. Count 10 seconds and release, so that all the asparagus is submerged into the boiling water. Let it boil for 1 minute.

3 Remove asparagus spears from the pot and put them in ice water until cold, drain and pat dry with paper towel. Set them aside.

4 Bring pot of water back to boil and add shrimp. After 1 minute, turn off the heat and let it sit for 3 minutes.

5 Remove from the pot and put them in ice water until cold. Drain and pat dry with paper towel. Set them aside.

6 Trim off the top part of shrimp for better presentation.

7 Cut asparagus into 1.5 inches.

8 In a blender, put silken tofu, sesame paste, fish sauce, water, soy sauce, sugar and mirin, and blend until smooth.

9 Spread tofu and sesame sauce on a serving plate and assemble asparagus and boiled shrimp.

Tip

The leftover tofu and sesame sauce can be used for dips and dressings for any vegetables.

Colorful and Flavorful Gyoza Dish for Easter Celebration

For the upcoming Easter celebration, we introduce a flavorful gyoza dish with a colorful presentation. Enjoy making and savoring it with your children.

Gyoza Rolled Cabbage Salad with Spicy Carrot Sauce

INGREDIENTS (Serves 4)

- ☐ 16 Day-Lee Pride Umami gyoza (chicken and leek flavor)
- ☐ 8 large cabbage leaves
- ☐ 16 shiso leaves (can be substituted with basil)

For Spicy Carrot Sauce:

- ☐ 1 tbsp finely chopped cilantro
- ☐ 1/2 cup grated carrot
- ☐ 1 tsp grated ginger
- ☐ 1 tbsp finely minced red onion
- ☐ 1 tbsp sriracha sauce
- ☐ 1/2 cup sushi vinegar
- ☐ 2 tbsp sesame oil

*For non-spicy version, omit sriracha sauce

Tips For Easter celebration, you can garnish this dish with some radish sprouts, cut out carrots into flower shapes, boiled egg chick, etc.

DIRECTIONS

1. Cook gyoza according to the instructions on back of the package
2. Prepare carrot sauce by mixing all the ingredients in a bowl
3. Spread each cabbage leaf on a flat surface. If the vein is too thick and hard for rolling, cut it out with a knife. (See below for how to peel individual cabbage leaves.)
4. On each cabbage leaf, put two leaves of shiso and two pieces of cooked gyoza side by side.
5. Just like making a burrito, fold bottom part of the cabbage leaf over the filling. Then fold each side tightly toward the center and finish rolling the rest to make a little package.
6. Cut each cabbage roll into two.
7. Put some carrot sauce on the bottom of the serving plate, and place the gyoza roll on the sauce, cut side up.

UMAMI GYOZA DUMPLINGS

NO MSG Added

Day-Lee Foods, Inc.

Nipponham Group www.dayleepride.com | www.crazycuizine.com | 800-329-5331 | Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670

Hearty Chinese Meal
with Kikkoman Seasonings

kikkoman
seasoning your life

【INGREDIENTS】 Makes 2 servings
■ 1 lb pork belly block ■ 3 tbsp Kikkoman Tamari Soy Sauce
■ 3 tbsp Kikkoman Hoisin Sauce ■ 6 tbsp soup taken after boiling pork

【DIRECTIONS】
1 Cut pork belly into 1/3-1/2 inch thick pieces
2 Boil them for 30-60 minutes The boiling time varies depending on the way it's marbled
3 Mix soup taken after boiling pork belly with Kikkoman Hoisin Sauce and Kikkoman Tamari Soy Sauce to make a mixture
4 Pan fry both sides of the pork belly pieces until golden brown
5 Add the mixture over the pork belly and braise it on medium heat
6 Once the mixture is thickened and coats pork belly it's ready to serve

GLUTEN-FREE TAMARI SOY SAUCE

It is traditionally brewed from four simple ingredients - water, soybeans, salt and sugar, is Non-GMO Project Verified and is certified gluten-free by the Gluten Intolerance Group (GIG)

GLUTEN-FREE HOISIN SAUCE

Add the distinctively savory, sweet spiced taste of Hoisin Sauce to stir-fries, dipping sauces, marinades and BBQ sauces. When used on meats and chicken, nothing quite compares to this versatile sauce.

TIPS

Double Cooked Pork Belly can be enjoyed as a rice bowl topping as well as a stuffing in a baguette sandwich. If you'd like to make it spicy, add dried red pepper to the mixture. You can paste the sauce left in the pan over an *onigiri* rice ball and then toast or grill it to enjoy as a *yaki-onigiri*.

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The rice factory's rice will be available at Japan Village, Daimobu, Shin Nippon Do, Sakuraya and Oishinbo.

For updated news please visit www.trf-ny.com

Enjoy Temaki Hand Rolls with Fresh Seafood

Ready to throw a temaki party! From upper left: black sea bass, seared only skin side, minced yellowfin tuna, and sliced salmon

When living in Japan, I used to love going to friends' houses for temaki (hand-rolled) sushi parties. In order to make this cone or cylinder-shaped sushi at home, all you need are your own two hands and sushi rice, nori seaweed and sashimi quality raw fish. I consulted seafood expert Mr. Yuji Haraguchi of Brooklyn restaurants Yuji Ramen/Okonomi and fish market OSAKANA to find out what fish are best for temaki. OSAKANA just opened an outpost in Katagiri's Grand Central location, and this is where I spoke with Haraguchi about his recommendations.

"Temaki sushi is comparable to taco night, where everyone can enjoy assembling their own meal from the prepared shells, meat and vegetables," says Haraguchi about the concept. OSAKANA has 20 varieties of local, rotating fish to pick from, and slices them for customers who don't want to do it themselves. For those that do, Haraguchi suggests starting with fish that are easier to cut such as tuna, salmon and octopus. Other options include thicker white fish like striped bass and tilefish, or thinner fluke. All of OSAKANA's products are fresh and safe to eat, eliminating the worry of determining whether fish is sashimi grade.

Whether it's about sushi, sashimi or grilled fish, Haraguchi always has an answer to your question.

For those who want to take their temaki up a notch, Haraguchi offers some advanced techniques. "For children or those who are not fans of raw fish, cooked fish can be used in flake form. With fish like tilefish, black sea bass, tuna and amberjack, you can try searing the skin before using. Demonstrating this to your friends with a blowtorch is sure to impress!" Another innovation is kobujime, or kelp-cured fish, where you wrap the (typically white) fish in konbu overnight to allow for maximum umami. If this sounds too labor intensive, another twist is to try marinating the fish in soy, sake and mirin for half hour to an hour before cutting.

A final piece of advice from Haraguchi is, "Once you've created your hand roll, eat it right away when it's most delicious!" Thanks to his encouragement, I'm excited to go out and experiment with temaki sushi. The best part is that as opposed to sliced sushi, the appearance doesn't have to be perfect so you can get as creative as you like. Due to OSAKANA's amazing variety, you can try different fish each time you temaki. Happy rolling!

—Reported by Stacy Smith

Advanced Technique: Sear Fish Skin

If you have a torch or burner, you can easily sear the fish's skin to enjoy its smoky aroma and crispy texture. If you don't have these tools, OSAKANA can do it for you.

OSAKANA
290 Graham Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11211
370 Lexington Ave., (Inside Katagiri Japanese Grocery Store), New York, NY 10017
www.osakanabk.com

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www.sangaria.com

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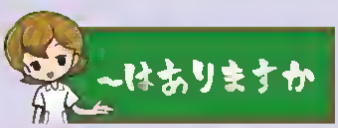
JAPAN POP QUIZ

During the sakoku period when Japan banned any trade with foreign countries there was only one harbor that remained open to foreign ships. Which harbor was it?

1. Yokohama
2. Kobe
3. Nagasaki
4. Hakodate



"~WA ARIMASU KA"

【meaning】 Do you have--?

【usage】 If youd like to check whether a store or restaurant carries what you want, use this phrase. Put the word for what you want in the beginning of the sentence, for example, "Manga-hon (comic books) wa arimasu ka" or "Ramen wa arimasu ka."

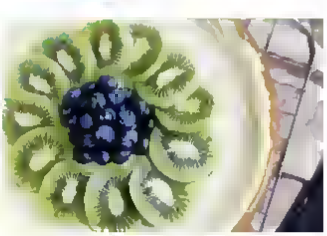
Mori-Nu Silken Tofu for Your Healthy Lifestyle

Morinaga Nutritional Foods, Inc., the makers of Mori-Nu Silken Tofu has been in the U.S. for over 30 years, even before tofu became a household name. Today, tofu is available from various manufacturers, but Mori-Nu Silken Tofu is unique due to its innovative packaging and texture. Mori-Nu's tofu does not require refrigeration until open and is shelf-stable for one-year if unopened. Morinaga recently revamped the brand's lineup and upgraded the package to catch the consumer's eye.

The new Mori-Nu Silken Tofu lineup consists of Soft, Firm, Extra Firm, Organic (soft texture only) and Nigari (firm texture only) and all of them have a silky smooth consistency. Whether you choose soft or extra firm, the tofu has a texture that easily melts in your mouth so you can enjoy it in many different styles. For example, you can make *hiyayakko* (cold tofu), stir-fry, simmered dishes, salads and even mix the tofu into smoothies, dressings, dipping sauces and sweets. If you want to make a dish vegan, you can use Mori-Nu Silken Tofu to replace eggs or milk to bind other ingredients.

Morinaga's aseptic package, decorated with a new graphic, completely shuts out light, air and bacteria, creating a preservative-free product that allows its fresh flavor to be preserved without refrigeration. You can find the new Mori-Nu Silken Tofu in Asian and American grocery stores. For more information, visit morinu.com to find a store near you.

Mori-Nu Silken Tofu is made with non-GMO soy beans grown in Ohio. It is also gluten-free, low-fat, dairy-free, vegan and kosher.



Mori-Nu Silken Tofu is a good alternative to eggs and dairy in baking.

Info www.morinu.com | www.morinaga-usa.com

MUSIC

Yamaha's New Call for Musicians to "Make Waves"

Technological advancement has always contributed to making our lives convenient, easy and enjoyable. And now Yamaha goes one step further and helps awaken each person's hidden talent. Established in the Shizuoka Prefecture in 1887, Yamaha is the world's largest company producing musical instruments and audio equipment. This year, a new campaign was announced by Yamaha called "Make Waves", encouraging all musicians, young and old, aspiring and experienced, to share their passion. As part of their campaign, Yamaha aims to release more than 50 new products by the end of this year.

Among their new lineup are two keyboards. Allowing you to move and dance freely is a compact keytar (a lightweight keyboard held like a guitar), Sonogenic SHS-500. Using a Yamaha app called Chord Tracker, it can analyze the music library on a smart phone or tablet and send which chords to play wirelessly to the instrument. Within minutes, you can play along to your favorite songs requiring little to no experience. For the more serious players are two digital stage pianos: 73-key CP73 and 88-key CP88. The CP series feature a wide variety of sounds, including classical grand pianos, vintage keys to play soulful jazz, and chromatic percussions for synthesized-pop. And with its internal Flash memory, the library of sounds is limitless. Which instrument will you pick up, to create your own 'wave'?

Info www.yamaha.com

Thanks to the compact keyboard, Sonogenic SHS-500, you can interact with your favorite music via wireless MIDI over Bluetooth.

Plasmic, a synthpop/experimental solo artist, demonstrated how to use and enjoy Sonogenic SHS-500 at the press preview earlier this year.

FOOD

Introducing a Gift Card for Japanese Curry

Rich, thick and flavorful, Japanese-style curry has been steadfastly spreading its roots in the New York food scene. The vanguard of this boom is GO! GO! CURRY!, serving unique, Kanazawa-style curry from the capital city of Ishikawa Prefecture. Topped with thick curry roux, katsu (Japanese-style cutlet), and sweet and savory katsu sauce over rice, their curry dish is full of umami. This February, they introduced a gift card for the first time since they landed in the U.S. 12 years ago, answering their customers' demands. Currently, GO! GO! CURRY! is holding a campaign offering an extra $5 value for those who purchase the $50 gift card. This special $55 Gift Card comes in a red pochibukuro (Japanese lucky envelope), and the campaign will continue while supplies last. Spread GO! GO!'s energizing wave to your friends, family and loved ones with this new gift card.

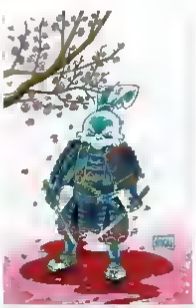
The $55 Gift Card, which comes in a lucky red envelope, is offered for a limited-time only during the campaign period.

Info www.gogocurryamerica.com

BOOK

Legendary *Usagi Yojimbo Comes Back* in Full Color for its 35th Year Anniversary

Originally published in 1984, *Usagi Yojimbo* is one of the longest-running independent comic book series in existence. The author is a Japanese-born American cartoonist and comic book artist, Stan Sakai, and his background greatly influenced the story about a samurai rabbit living in Japan in the late 16th Century to early 17th Century. This June, IWD Publishing will publish *Usagi Yojimbo* comic books monthly in full color for the first time ever, and it will also curate a fully-colored graphic novel library of the complete *Usagi Yojimbo*. Miyamoto Usagi—an apparent inspiration from the legendary samurai Miyamoto Musashi (1584-1645)—who once served as the personal bodyguard for a Japanese warlord, now traverses this unique world – a landscape populated by ghosts, dinosaurs, monsters, and warriors of all kinds – as a ronin. In his many exciting adventures, the 'swordsrabbit" hones his skills, saves villages, and often finds himself navigating the delicate affairs of national/political significance. You can preorder *Usagi Yojimbo #1* through your local comic shop in April or visit www.comicshoplocator.com to find a store near you.



Info IDW Publishing
www.idwpublish-ng.com/idw-welcomes-stan-sakai-and-usagi-yojimbo
www.usagiyojimbo.com

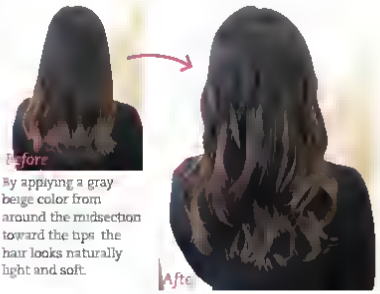
Beauty & Health Tricks

VOL. 19: SUBTLE HIGHLIGHTS AND GRADATIONS ARE TRENDING

Continuing from the previous issue, we introduce ways you can change your winter hair to new spring styles. PAKU from GARDEN NEW YORK talked about hair cutting last month, and he will give us advice on coloring this time.

As mentioned last month, key words for hair trends this spring are "fashionably loose," "imperfect" and "natural." How can we interpret these for hair color? "Choose colors that are less assertive. In other words, when dyeing your hair, choose a color slightly brighter than your original hair color," says PAKU. Also, he suggests dyeing only the lower half of the hair, as opposed to applying color to the whole head. Also, by applying less of the dyeing solution to the middle and more to the tips, you can achieve natural gradation and lighter color on the ends. As shown in the photos on the right, he uses a technique called Butterfly Chip to dye certain selected sections, which makes the final result look more three dimensional and creates subtle nuances.

If you have short hair, create sharp edges by dyeing the hair around your face line with a color that is one tone darker than yours. By doing this, outer hair with a naturally lighter color will stand out. Again, the point is to choose a color just a little darker than your original hair color to create subtlety and a natural impression.



By applying a gray beige color from around the midsection toward the tips, the hair looks naturally light and soft.

The technique called Butterfly Chip allows dyeing of certain selected sections, and is effective in creating natural shades.

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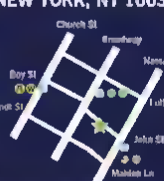

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Shiatsu Everyday: *Stay Healthy by Stimulating Tsubo Points*

Problems Around the Liver Area

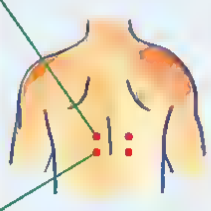
"Tsubo" is an important therapeutic point or acupressure point in shiatsu massage. Each point sitting on the meridian line (energy flow line) of the body is related to the organs and internal systems, and by stimulating tsubo points you can improve energy flow and maintain health. Get to know which tsubo point is effective for a certain symptom and try giving yourself a shiatsu massage. This month we introduce tsubo points for problems around the liver area.

肝兪 KAN-YU

Around the center of the back, the two points 1.2-1.5 inches outside the backbone (the ninth thoracic vertebrae) are KAN YU. Stimulating these tsubo points releases back tension and helps improve liver function, as well as increases in appetite.

胆兪 TAN-YU

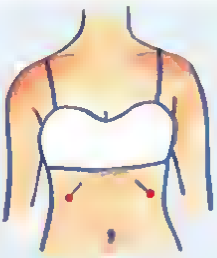
Just below the KAN-YU points are TAN YU, which are good for releasing back tension and helping to improve stomach and intestine functions. Those who tend to have gallstones should put pressure on TAN-YU to ease the pain.



Notes: Since both KAN-YU and TAN YU are located in the middle of the back, it is not easy to give the proper pressure to these points. It would be better to have someone's help.

期門 KIMON

The right and left KIMON are located directly below the breast bone and the sixth rib. These points are helpful in easing nausea and reducing the desire to vomit, especially caused by drinking too much. This is the best tsubo for hangovers!



行間 KŌKAN

Located in between the foot's thumb and second toe, KŌKAN is good for problems in the liver area, including the gallbladder, menstrual cycle issues and intercostal neuralgia pain.

Illustration
by Ai Tateiwayashi

How to Give Pressure to Tsubo Points

Each spot is to be pushed for 10 seconds. Do not put strong pressure all at once, but rather slowly increase your fingers' pressure on the tsubo. Once you hit the deepest point, stay there for 10 seconds and release slowly. Pause a little, and do this one more time. Repeat at least 3 times.

Instruction by Yuko Nozaki, LAc, of iDo Holistic Center
22 E. 49th St. (bet. Madison & 5th Aves.)
New York, NY 10017
TEL. 212-599-5300 | www.idocenter.com

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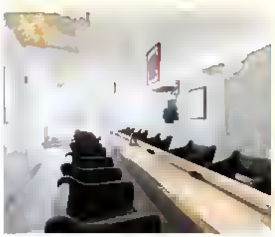

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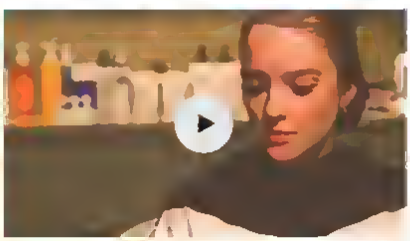

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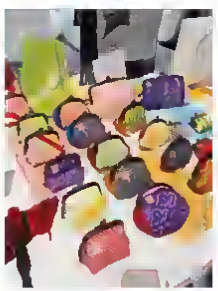
NY NOW Report Vol.2

NY NOW is a major tradeshow featuring home decor, lifestyle items, and gifts held twice a year. At the latest NY NOW, held from February 3-6, Chopsticks NY staff had a chance to sneak paek some of the newest items (not even on the market). Continued from the March issue, we introduce notable findings at NY NOW

BUNZABURO's Tie-Dye Bags and Scarves

Shibori (Japanese tie-dye) has centuries-old history, and the shibori developed in Kyoto is particularly praised for its elegance and elaborateness. Today shibori art and fashion in Kyoto have evolved into original styles as seen in BUNZABURO's futuristic scarf (left) and bag (middle and right). With cloud-like shape and metallic color, the scarf will be expressive around your neck. The duman-shaped bag expands and transforms itself into a pineapple shape when you put some stuff in it.

www.bunzaburo.com



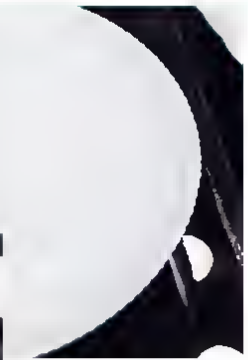
Kyo-kanoko Purse by Kazuyo Kawamoto

Kazuyo Kawamoto is a premier craftsperson specializing in a traditional style of tie-dye called Kyo-kanoko Hittashibori. Her collection of purses decorated with Hittashibori possesses elegance and kawaii aesthetics at the same time.

Koransha's Pinstripe Relief Series Plate, Cup & Saucer

Beautifully-lined up radial patterns are chic and modern in Koransha's Pinstripe Relief Series. Established in 1689 in Arita, Koransha is one of the longest-running and highly regarded porcelain brands in the world, and with its innovative mind and solid techniques the company constantly introduces tableware that amazes people. This simple yet meticulously calculated plate and cup & saucer set represents typical Japanese aesthetics, yet it also fits in with Western-style tables effortlessly.

www.koransha-run.jp



momoco Bear Figurines

Resembling gummy bears, this cute series of porcelain bear figurines is the first project of momoco Arita porcelain figure brand. The momoco bear items are made in collaboration with Arita artists and potters who infuse life into the bears in original ways. White bear with flower relief is made by Seiichi Kawasaki, and the bears with elaborate patterns by Ichikawa Kazan Kiln.

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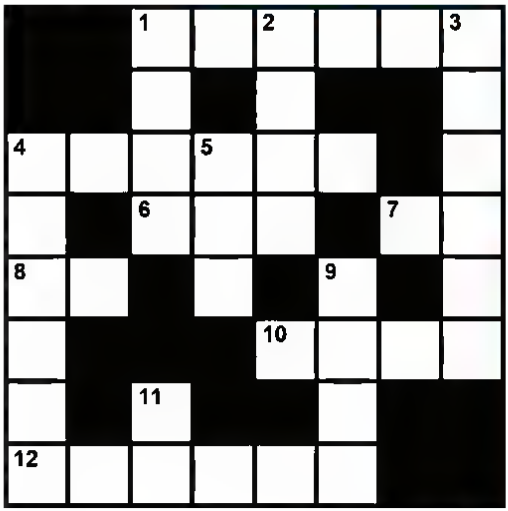

Across

1. March through May, ___ (cherry blossoms) bloom throughout Japan.

4. Conjunction that means "so", "therefore" and "accordingly"

6. This national park is a highland stretching through three prefectures Gunma, Fukushima, and Niigata It has a vast marshland and attracts many visitors

7. ___ is a post-positional particle that introduces a subject or topic, and roeans "too" and "also"

8. Meaning "air", the word is often used in the compound like *ten* ___ (weather), *fun i* (atmosphere ambience), ___ *mochi* (feeling) and *gen* ___ (vigor, spirit)

10. ____ (rice bran) is often used for pickling vegetables in Japan

12. Used in polite expressions, ___ is a dictionary form of a verb meaning "to inquire' and "to go'

Down

1. "Bottom" in Japanese

2. ___ is a demonstrative pronoun meaning "this"

3. *Ao* means "blue" and *sora* means "sky", and ____ is "blue sky"

4. ___ is a dictionary form of a verb meaning "to be made of", "to be built", and "to be able"

5. Birthmark and bruise are both ____ in Japanese

9. ___ can be used for meaning 'to rain," "to snow," "to pour," 'to fall' and 'to frost"

11. Arrows and darts are both ____ in Japanese

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Charms in Japan

Senkou

Senkou is a stick type incense that is traditionally used in Japan for praying to one's ancestors People light a stick of senkou and place it in the middle of an ash-filled incense plate It is said to be best if the smoke rises straight up. The good scent that senkou emits cleanses impurities from the area It not only reaches ancestors but also the person who burns the senkou and the people around him/her purifying their bodies and souls It's more effective if you recite the prayer you believe while burning senkou This custom is not uniquely Japanese but an import from China It spread to the public in Japan after the Edo period (1603-1868)

Courtesy of Bruna Nishimura / http://members.at.infoseek.co.jp/bruna/
Illustration by Mihiko Kanno

Sakura Matsuri

Dates and Locations

Come and celebrate the full-blooms of Japanese cherry blossoms in festivals throughout New York and in neighboring states

Photo Courtesy of National Cherry Blossom Festival

National Cherry Blossom Festival
Events take place at various locations. For the cherry blossoms, head to
1500 Maine Ave. SW Washington DC 20024
www.nationalcherryblossomfestival.org | TEL. 877-442-5666

April 6 - 14

Essex County Cherry Blossom Festival
Branch Brook Park
Newark, NJ 07104
www.essexcountyparks.org | TEL. 973 268 3500

Photo Courtesy of Basel Al-Shahal & Shiho Amano, Japanese Society of Greater Philadelphia

Subaru Cherry Blossom Festival of Greater Philadelphia
Fairmount Park
Philadelphia PA 19131
www.subarucherryblossom.org | TEL. 267 348-0250

April 13

Roosevelt Island Cherry Blossom Festival
Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms Park
Roosevelt Island NY 10044
www.fdrfourfreedomspark.org
TEL. 212 204-8831

April 20

15th Sakura Matsuri at Flushing Meadows Corona Park
Flushing Meadows Corona Park
Queens NY 11375
www.jaany.org
TEL. 212-840-6942

Photo Courtesy of Brooklyn Botanic Garden

Brooklyn Botanic Garden Sakura Matsuri
Enter through 455 Flatbush Ave. or 990 Washington Ave. Brooklyn NY 11225
www.bbg.org | TEL. 718-623-7200

Other Cherry Blossom Viewing Spots:

Cherry Hill
Central Park
New York NY 10024
www.centralparknyc.org
TEL. 212-310-6600

Randall's Island Park
20 Randall's Island Park
New York, NY 10035
www.randallsisland.org
TEL. 212-830-7722

New York Botanical Garden
2900 Southern Blvd. Bronx, NY 10458
www.nybg.org | TEL. 718 817 8700

Riverside Park
At Riverside Dr. stretching through
100th to 125th Sts
New York, NY 10115
www.riversideparknyc.org
TEL. 212 870-3070

Sakura Park
500 Riverside Dr.
(Entrances on Claremont Ave. & Riverside Dr.)
New York, NY 10027
www.nycgovparks.org/parks/sakura park

April 28

46th Annual Cherry Blossom Festival
Wooster Square
New Haven CT 06510
www.historicwoostersquare.org
TEL. 203-777-1371

April 28

City of White Plains Cherry Blossom Festival
Turnure Park
White Plains NY 10601
www.cityofwhiteplains.com
TEL. 914 422-1336

TOCHIGI PREFECTURE

a History, Nature and Gastronomy Paradise

Chopsticks NY republishes selected articles from att.JAPAN, a multilingual travel magazine for foreign visitors to Japan. This month, we feature Tochigi Prefecture, located a couple of hours drive from Tokyo. The prefecture is a destination that offers numerous historical landmarks, *onsen* hot springs, and spectacular nature.

NATURE

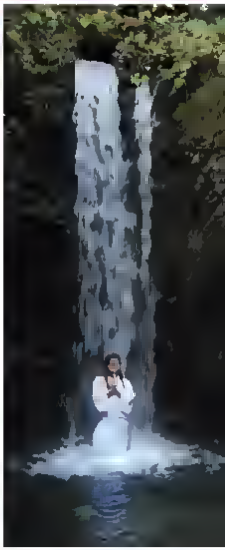
Wakayama Farm's Bamboo Thicket (Utsunomiya City)

An impressive sight for its vastness, you can pick *takenoko* (bamboo shoots) during the beautiful springtime from mid April to mid-May

EXPERIENCE

Zen and Waterfall Purification Experience in Izurumachi (Tochigi City)

Just 30 minutes by car from the center of Tochigi, you'll come across Izurumachi on a rocky terrain rising perpendicularly and standing out from the background. There in the midst of the thick vegetation of Mt. Izuru's virgin forests, you can find Mangan-ji Temple, which offers opportunities to try zazen meditation and waterfall purification. And since you're there, why not try the local specialties of Izuru soba noodles and visit each restaurant that offers cuisines referenced in literature from the Edo period?



Ashikaga Flower Park (Ashikaga City)

A spot to enjoy the flowers of each season as well as a striking illumination show. Mid-April to early May is the best season to see wisterias of up to 150 years of age, their beauty will leave you speechless. For easy access, enter through the Ashikaga Flower Park Station that opened just last year.

Nikko National Park (Nikko City)

Having opened in 1934, this is one of the first of Japan's national parks. Mt. Nantai and Mt. Nikko-Shirane are among the area's volcano mountains, while other famous spots of scenic beauty are the marshlands of Senjogahara and Odashirogahara, Lake Chuzenji, and the Kegon no Taki waterfall.

Kegon no Taki Waterfall

Together with Nachi no Taki (Wakayama Prefecture) and Fukuroda no Taki (Ibaraki Prefecture), Kegon no Taki is one of Japan's "Three Most Famous Waterfalls". The water of Lake Chuzenji falls from a steep cliff 97 meters (about 318 ft.) high, creating a magnificent sight that you can enjoy from a viewing platform at the falls' bottom.

Senjogahara

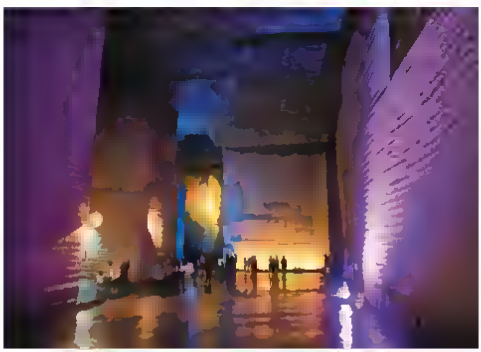
A marshy grassland at 1,400 meters (about 4,590 ft.) above sea level. During the day you can enjoy a relaxed stroll in nature, while at night you can marvel at the open starry sky that has made this a favorite spot among astrophotographers.

This "Tochigi" story previously appeared in atJAPAN. The information was updated on March 5th, 2019, but further changes are possible.

Utsunomiya Jazz and Cocktails (Utsunomiya City)

Arguably the most famous is alto saxophone virtuoso Sadao Watanabe, native to Tochigi, but Utsunomiya has connections with many more jazz musicians and has developed a jazz culture of its own. Also, with its bartenders creating cocktails that have been awarded first prizes for the last four years, the city has become a hub for bartenders from all over the country creating unique cocktails. Barhop around and taste delicious concoctions that can't be found anywhere else!

HISTORY



Oya History Museum (Utsunomiya City)

A space with a temple-like atmosphere that used to be a mine for the stone known as "Oya stone" peculiar to the area. Its main space is an enormous cavern 20,000 square meters (about 215,280 sq. ft.), 140 meters (about 490 ft.) high, 150 meters (about 490 ft.) wide and 30 meters (about 100 ft.) deep where you can actually feel the warmth of the huge Oya stone and experience an almost magical aura. The old mine has gained considerable attention recently for having been used as a location for films including *Rurouni Kenshin* and various events.

Kura no Machi (Tochigi City)

In the Edo Period, transportation via the Uzuma River contributed to Edo's (Old Tokyo) prosperity and established Tochigi as a merchant capital of the Northern Kanto region. Numerous warehouses were built along the Uzuma River and the main street. You can see them either on foot or by going down the river on a boat.

Nikko Toshogu (Nikko City)

A shrine dedicated to Tokugawa Ieyasu, the founder of the Tokugawa shogunate that ruled Japan during the Edo Period (1603-1868) and a UNESCO World Heritage site. The famous Yomeimon gate, a National Treasure featuring over 500 sculptures, is a luxurious and splendid work of art. After its recent renewal, the marvelous colors of the original sculptures have come back to life.

DINING

Gyoza (Dumplings)

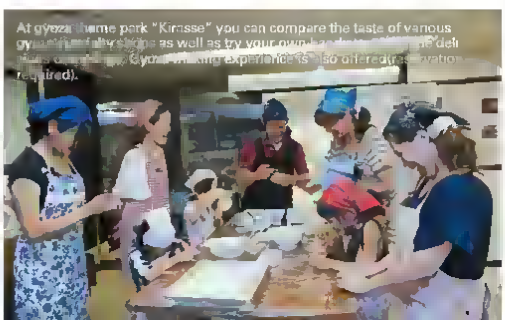
Tochigi boasts one of the largest gyoza dumpling consumption amounts in Japan, and particularly famous are the gyoza of Utsunomiya that are brimming with a lot of vegetables. The following are some of the city's most popular (and unusual) gyoza restaurants.

Utsunomiya Minmin
Opened in 1958, it offers pan-fried, boiled and deep-fried gyoza.

Utsunomiya Gyozakan
Besides the usual gyoza, this shop offers tonkatsu made of gyoza filling wrapped in pork and gyoza and onigiri rice-ball combos

Miso and Gyoza's Aogen
A shop that offers a dumpling and miso collaboration that you can enjoy. Green onion miso dumplings with special miso sauce

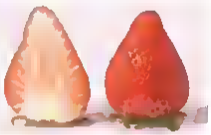
Iki-iki Gyoza
A shop offering gyozas in 600 different varieties. The founder's assortment is 10 pieces and includes gyoza made with 10 different ingredients such as curry and cheese



At gyoza theme park "Kimisse" you can compare the taste of various gyoza and ... gyoza ... (reservation required).

Strawberries

Tochigi Prefecture has been Japan's premier strawberry-producing area for 50 years. Its climate, with vast temperature differences between day and night during the winter and with long daylight hours in the summer, makes it suitable for cultivating strawberries. Furthermore, local farmers have put much effort in the creation of various new types of strawberries.



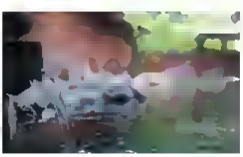
Sky Berry
A very sweet variety despite its large size, the Sky Berry is exceptionally juicy with an elegant flavor.

Tochiotome
A Tochigi variety, it is also the most cultivated variety from all over Japan. Its excellent balance of sweetness and acidity with its rich taste have made it very popular.

Tochihime
Tender flesh and juicy sweetness are the characteristics of this strawberry which, because of difficulties in transportation, it can only be found (and enjoyed) within the boundaries of Tochigi Prefecture.

Lemon Milk

Lemon-flavored dairy products with a nostalgic taste combining the mellowness and sweetness of milk and the lemon's sour scent (no lemon juice is used in their production). A popular local drink whose recipe and packaging have survived from the period after World War II to present.



ONSEN

Starting with Nasu Onsen and Kinugawa Onsen, Tochigi has several hot springs spots. After having experienced its sights and cuisine, relaxing in a hot spring is a must!

About *att.JAPAN*
The magazine *att.JAPAN* is for non-Japanese visiting from overseas and those residing in Japan. This quarterly magazine written in English, Mandarin, and Korean offers a wide range of information about Japan—from travel and sightseeing to various aspects of traditional culture and the latest trends. The magazine is distributed at major airports, hotels, and tourist information centers throughout Japan.
http://att-japan.net/en/ att.JAPAN att.japan
www.youtube.com/user/attJAPAN

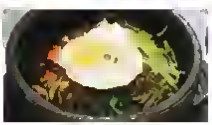
This "Tochigi" story previously appeared in att.JAPAN. The information was updated on March 5th, 2019, but further changes are possible.

Healthful Korean Dishes Featuring House-made Tofu

Opened last November, Woori Korean Restaurant is a new addition to the rapidly evolving Flushing food scene. It bills itself as the "King of Tofu", as it makes tofu in-house daily. You can find their crafted tofu in *banchan* (assorted complimentary appetizers) or on the menu showcasing it such as various *Soft Tofu Soups* (600 bowls sold per week). Served piping hot, each *Soft Tofu Soup* is filled with umami and instantly boosts your energy when digging in. It comes with rice cooked in a hot pot, and at the end of your meal, you can add hot water to the remaining rice and enjoy drinking rice tea! Woori also offers Korean standards like *Japchae* (stir-fried grass root noodles), *Seafood Pancake* and *Hot Stone Pot Bibimbap* which are absolutely authentic yet prepared with a bit of a twist by Owner and Chef Naihwan Chang who has extensive experience in both Korean and Chinese cuisines. The restaurant has more comforting choices such as *udon* noodles, *ramyun* and fried rice, so get energized with Woori's healthy dishes.

Silky fluffy house-made tofu in invigorating *Seafood Soft Tofu Soup* melts in your mouth

Whether you choose *Seafood Pancake*, *Japchae* or *Soft Tofu Soup*, Woori's dishes are nutritious and healthy



Stone Pot Bulgogi Bibimbap features marinated beef, assorted vegetables and fried egg over rice

Woori Korean Restaurant
136-76 39th St., (bet. Union & 138th Sts.)
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Comforting and Plentiful Dungan Cuisine

Opened last summer in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn, Lagman House is New York's very first Dungan cuisine specialty restaurant. But what is Dungan cuisine, first of all? Dungan refers to a group of Muslim people of Western Chinese origin and spread throughout Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Central Asia. Most of the Dungan inhabiting countries are landlocked, and naturally their cuisine maximizes the blessings of the land, such as vegetables, herbs, and meat. At the family-owned Lagman House, there are stellar items listed on the menu from lamian (hand-pulled noodles) in various cooking methods to soup dishes to dumplings. Frankly, it's really hard to choose which one you should start with if you are new to the cuisine, but their staff, of course all Dungans, will help you. For the warmer seasons, Ali Azimov, manager of the restaurant, recommends *Len Fin* (pictured above), a cold dish featuring bean jelly, grilled beef, and various vegetables, and hidden underneath is lamian. Seasoned with a soy sauce base, a thin dressing, it can be enjoyed as a salad, but thanks to the thick, chewy lamian, it makes you more than full. If you need an energy boost, their hot soups full of ingredients are invigorating. And don't forget *Dungan Style Samsa*. Flaky pastry stuffed with melt-ingly soft sautéed onion and minced beef is absolutely addictive.

Savory sauteed dishes (chives, eggplant and beef, and pickled cabbage) are enjoyed with steamed buns. The *Dungan Style Samsa* is simple yet masterfully made.

Lagman House
2612 E. 14th St., Brooklyn, NY 11235
TEL. 718-872-5979 | Tue.-Sun. 11 am-10 pm

EAT'S
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Thailand-born Chef Sakulclanuwat has lengthy experience in high-end restaurants in New York. Her cooking technique upgrades this Asian street food to a quality treat.
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Entertainment Event / Leisure

Exhibition

April 3-6 FREE

The Japanese Aesthetic of *Kehai* in the Photography of Yukihito Masuura

Foto Care

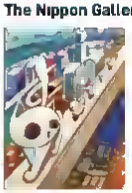
A three-day exhibition will open at Foto Care, featuring the work of Tokyo-born photographer Yukihito Masuura. Printed on traditional Japanese washi paper, Mr. Masuura documents a religious tradition known as *Sengu* that dates back 1,300 years. Involving the cyclical reconstruction and re-consecration of Japan's most sacred Shinto shrines, Mr. Masuura chose to photograph Izumo Oyashiro shrine (every 60 years) and Ise Jingu shrine (every 20 years) as this is only the third time in history that the Sengu of these two shrines has overlapped. Meet the artist at the opening reception on April 3 at 6:30 pm.

Location: 43 W. 22nd St. (bet. 5th & 6th Aves.)
New York, NY 10010 | Info: www.fotocare.com
www.masuura.com/en

April 11-17 FREE

New Artist Exhibition in New York: New Energy of Japan

The Nippon Gallery



Springing from the 1950's in Japan, the Gutai Group is regarded as an avant-garde art movement that embraced a radical and energetic approach to art making. After Gutai, the movement has been carried on by many other groups, and became the source of Japan's abstract expressions. One of the groups is NAU, standing for "New Artists Unit", whose works will be showcased in the Nippon Gallery. Composed of more than 30 established modern artists, the exhibition will feature two dimensional and three-dimensional abstract works.

Location: 145 W. 57th St.
(bet. 6th & 7th Aves.) New York, NY 10019
TEL. 212-581-2223 | www.nipponclub.org

March 5 - June 16

The Tale of Genji: A Japanese Classic Illuminated

Metropolitan Museum of Art

Written by Murasaki Shikibu, a court lady of the early eleventh-century imperial court, *The Tale of Genji* remains one of Japan's most treasured works of literature. The tale follows Genji and his romantic affairs with some of the most iconic women in the history of Japanese literature. Inspired by the novel, the Met will showcase more than 120 works from the eleventh century to present, including paintings, silk robes, lacquerware and manga. And for the first time outside of Japan, rare works will be on display from Ishiyamadera Temple where the author supposedly began writing her novel.

Location: 1000 5th Ave. (at 82nd St.)
New York, NY 10028
TEL. 212-535-7710 | www.metmuseum.org

Performance/ Workshop/Events

April 4

New Japan Matsuri

Japan Village

Leading up to the upcoming professional wrestling supershow, G1 Supercard at Madison Square Garden, Japan Village will be hosting New Japan Matsuri as a chance for fans to meet with wrestlers from New Japan Pro Wrestling (NJPW) as well as a talk show and merchandise stalls. Founded in 1972, NJPW is one of the Japanese professional wrestling associations, promoting and hosting wrestling matches and has established a huge fandom worldwide.

Location: 934 3rd Ave.
(bet. 36th & 35th Sts.), Brooklyn, NY 11232
TEL. 347-584-4579 | www.japanvillage.com

April 9 & April 11-14

Hitohana Hitosekai (One Flower One World) Performance and *Make Visible* Workshop

Vangeline Theater

Vangeline Theater and the New York Butoh Institute present, in association with Triskelion Arts, performance *Hitohana Hitosekai (One Flower One World)* and workshop *Make Visible* by Butoh dancer Moeno Wakamatsu. Ms. Wakamatsu creates and performs original dance performances influenced by Japanese Butoh and her Buddhist upbringing. The performance will be held on April 9 at Triskelion Arts, and the workshop will run from April 11-14 at various locations.

Location: Triskelion Arts, 106 Colyer St.
(bet. Bonker St. & Clifford Pl.) Brooklyn, NY 11222
www.vangeline.com
butohinstitute@gmail.com

April 11

Akiko Yano Trio: Featuring Will Lee & Chris Parker

Joe's Pub

Japan's beloved pianist, composer, singer and songwriter Akiko Yano is celebrated for her avant garde jazz and masterful piano playing. Since her debut in 1976, she has performed worldwide and produced dozens of albums, including one produced by T Bone Burnett in 2008. Joined by her longtime New York friends and virtuoso musicians, Will Lee (bass and vocals) and Chris Parker (drums), the Akiko Yano Trio will return for their annual concert at Joe's Pub. Tickets are available for purchase online and at the box office.

Location: 425 Lafayette St.
(bet. 4th St. & Astor Pl.) New York, NY 10003
TEL. 212-967-7555 | www.joespub.com

April 13-14

NY Ramen Contest & International Food Avenue JapanFes

Every year JapanFes lines the streets of New York with ramen shops from Japan and allows attendees to vote on their favorite bowl. In the previous Ramen Contest, JapanFes invited seven ramen shops, each from different prefectures of Japan. Other food vendors will also be in attendance offering popular Japanese street food. Some of the previous food vendors included Moffle Barn, Kaiki Balls, and Neponset Cafe. For this year too, attendees can expect a festive weekend, filled with authentic Japanese cuisine and lively entertainment.

Locations: East Village (at Broadway, bet. 6th & 9th Sts.) New York, NY 10011
& Astoria (at Steinway St. bet. Broadway & 34th Ave.), Queens, NY 11103
www.japanfes.com

April 13 & 27

Craft Making at Ohisama Club

R/Lingo Learning Center

Institution for learning Japanese language and culture, R/Lingo Learning Center will offer family classes, "Ohisama Club" twice every month on Saturdays. Inviting parents and children at one to two-and-a-half years old, the classes will involve arts and crafts making and practice in singing songs. The classes for this month will revolve around themes of "Living Creatures of Spring" (Apr. 13) and "Cherry Blossom Gathering" (Apr. 27). Reservations must be made in advance via phone or email.

Location: 2460 Lemoine Ave.
(at Washington Ave.) Fort Lee, NJ 07024
TEL. 201-947-4707 | www.japaneseschool.org
ringo.nyikuei@gmail.com

April 20

Nihonga Workshop

Seto Sakura Gallery

Founded in Fukushima Prefecture, the Seto Sakura Gallery strives to create an international appreciation for contemporary Nihonga (Japanese painting). In this hands-on workshop, participants will learn about the history and significance of Nihonga paintings as well as the materials used including mineral pigments, paper, gelatin and more. Participants will also discover how to combine these materials and create their own Nihonga piece to take home. Advance registration is required and can be made online.

Location: 501 W. 20th St., (bet. 10th & 11th Aves.)
New York, NY 10011 | TEL. 212-741-2120
www.setosakurogallery.com

Happening

April Promotion: 20% Off on Cut & Digital Perm

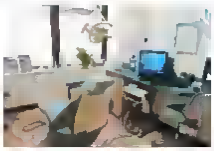
GARDEN NEW YORK

For this month's promotion, the West Village's Japanese hair salon, GARDEN NEW YORK will be offering a 20% discount on their haircut & digital perm service until Apr. 30 for new customers. According to Takashi, a hairstylist at GARDEN, digital perm helps the hair achieve gorgeous curls that'll naturally swing in the spring wind. To receive this offer, appoint your hairstylist using their website, and mention Chopsticks NY at the time of your appointment.

Location: 323 W. 11th St., (bet. Greenwich & Washington Sts.) New York, NY 10014
TEL. 212-647-9303 | www.garden-nyc.com

Discount on Whitening Service

Waterside Dental Care



At Waterside Dental Care, they insist upon personalized care for each and every patient with their well being in mind. For the entire month of April, Waterside Dental Care will provide a discount on their whitening service (includes whitening gel and custom trays, originally $600) for $199.

Location: 10 Waterside Plz., (at 125th St.)
New York, NY 10010
TEL. 212-683-6260 | www.watersidedds.com

Happenings Feature

Japan's Popular Discount Store Daiso Opens Doors in Flushing

Daiso Japan

Daiso has been one of Japan's most beloved discount variety stores since their establishment in 1972. Since then, they have exponentially grown throughout the world with over thousands of stores in Japan alone, and several thousands more worldwide including over 70 in the U.S. Mid- to West Coast. And at long last—and much anticipated by fans—Daiso opened their first East Coast location in Flushing, Queens on Mar. 8. Found on the second floor of the Skyview Center, the shelves are stocked with kitchen gadgets, tableware, stationeries, cosmetics, snacks and more, priced at or about $1.99. In total, Daiso boasts to carry 70,000 products, with more than 500 new items created each month. At the event to celebrate their grand opening, Daiso offered gift bags and raffle tickets, and greeted their first customers with a Japanese taiko (drum) performance.

Location: The Shops at Skyview Center
40-24 College Point Blvd., (at Roosevelt Ave.)
Queens, NY 11354
www.daisoglobal.com

JFOODO Promotes Japanese Rice Flour at the International Restaurant & Foodservice Show of New York

JFOODO

The Japan Food Product Overseas Promotion Center (JFOODO), which was established by the Japanese government in 2017 with the mission of strategic planning and implementation for branding and promotion of Japanese food products in overseas markets, took part in the trade show "International Restaurant & Foodservice Show of New York" at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center. In a span of three days from Mar. 3 to 5, thousands of food industry professionals including caterers, chefs, bakers and more were in attendance. Among the hundreds of exhibitors, JFOODO took the opportunity to introduce Japanese rice flour. Unlike usual flour, Japanese rice flour is sustainable and has a distinct flavor and aroma, making it most ideal for use in gluten free bakeries. To demonstrate, chef and owner of artisanal bakery Bien Cuit, Zachary Golper was invited to showcase his bread made from Japanese rice flour.

Location: Jacob K. Javits Convention Center
655 W. 34th St. New York, NY 10001
www.jetro.go.jp/en/jfoodo

桜餅

Sakuramochi

Here at Minamoto Kitchoan, our Sakuramochi is made with sweet, smooth red bean paste enclosed in sticky rice, then bundled in pickled cherry leaf, topped off with a salt-cured cherry blossom. The leaf and flower's saltiness perfectly dances around with the mochi's gentle sweetness.

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Japan Village will be hosting New Japan Matsuri, a fan festival leading up to G1 SUPERCARD at Madison Square Garden. Events include a talk show with NJPW wrestlers, merchandise stalls, and more to come!

934 3rd Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11232
(347) 584-4579 info@japanvillage.com

DIRECTIONS
D/N/R Trains to 36th Street
B37 Bus to 33-34/3rd Ave
Exit 23 on Brooklyn-Queens Expy

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Friday 12 pm to 9 pm
Saturday 11 am to 9 pm

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